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***Carson Introduces Legislation Mandating National Database Of
Nursing Home Employees
H.R. 3933 "Patient Abuse Prevention Act of 2002"***

Washington, D.C. --

Today, Second District Congressman Brad Carson (D-OK) announced the introduction of sweeping long-term care reform legislation that would amend the Medicare and Medicaid programs for skilled nursing facilities and other facilities providing home health services and long term care services requiring these facilities to conduct background checks on all applicants. H.R. 3933, "The Patient Abuse Prevention Act of 2002" would require information gathered on potentially harmful employees to be entered into a national database.

"Day after day, throughout our country, we continue to hear stories about employees who have abused residents of nursing home facilities where they are supposed to be taken care of," said Congressman Carson. "This piece of legislation will pick those bad apples out, leaving the over-whelming majority of employees who dedicate their lives to giving the best care possible. It is imperative, if we are going to increase the level of care in nursing homes, that we share, on a nationwide level, information about potentially dangerous applicants."

The National Health Care Fraud and Abuse Data Collection Program would house thousands of potentially abusive employees who have been red-flagged through background checks administered by the states, in conjunction with the Attorney General's office. H.R. 3933 would mandate that long-term care facilities or providers check this database before hiring any individual.

Additionally, this piece of legislation would establish Prevention and Training Demonstration Projects that would make eligible funds to facilities (public or private non-profit) to be used for:

- Examine ways to improve collaboration between state health care survey and provider certificate agencies, long-term care ombudsman programs, the long-term care industry, and local community members;

- To identify and disseminate best practices for preventing and reducing patient abuse;
- To examine patient care issues relating to regulatory oversight, with a focus on staff training, staff stress management, and staff supervision.

“I believe the issue of long-term care for the elderly is finally emerging as a national priority and real reform is around the corner,” said Congressman Carson. “Congress has the opportunity to begin traveling down that road to reform by taking action on this piece of legislation.”

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